

**MEETING NOTES**  
**Androscoggin Riverlands State Park**  
**Advisory Committee Meeting #3**  
November 18, 2009  
Key Bank Business Service Center, Lewiston, Maine

**ATTENDANCE:**

Initials	Name	Interest Represented/ email
JG	Jody Goodwin	Town of Turner jodyike@megalink.net
CN	Charlie Noonan	Town Manager, Town of Leeds tmgreene@fairpoint.net
DH	David Hediger	City Planner, City of Lewiston dhediger@ci.lewiston.me.us
FL	Fergus Lea	Chair, AR Watershed Council flea@avcog.org
NW	Neil Ward	Director, Androscoggin River Alliance nward@fairpoint.net
RB	Roy Boies	Interim Conservation Director, ME Bass Foundation bassinray@hotmail.com
DC	David Chabot	Game Warden, Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife dave.chabot@maine.gov
EM	Ed Morris	President, Turner Ridge Riders morris1@megalink.net
LR	Larry Robinson	President, Turner Timberland ATV Club
MS	Mike Spugnardi	Trailmaster, Turner Timberland ATV Club spsigns@megalink.net
MM	Mike Moreau	
MA	Michael Auger	Director, Land Protection & Stewardship Androscoggin Land Trust
BA	Brian Alexander	Mountain Biking balexander1@roadrunner.com
SM	Stephen Mohr	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. smohr@mohrseredin.com
TS	Tatyanna Seredin	Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects Inc. tseredin@mohrseredin.com
RH	Ron Hunt	Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands ron.hunt@maine.gov
WH	Will Harris	Director, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands will.harris@maine.gov
KE	Kathy Eickenberg	Chief of Planning, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands katherine.eickenberg@maine.org

RT	Rex Turner	Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands rex.turner@maine.gov
BF	Bruce Farnham	Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands bruce.farnham@maine.gov
SR	Scott Ramsay	Off-Road Vehicle Director, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands scott.ramsay@maine.gov
JW	Joe Wiley	Wildlife Biologist, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands joe.wiley@maine.gov

## A. AGENDA

1. Introduction – Will Harris
2. Draft Master Plan Review – Mohr & Seredin
  - A. Recommendations/Goals
  - B. Draft Master Plan
  - C. Review of Uses/Routes
  - D. Detailed Concept Plans
3. Advisory Committee Comments
4. Next Steps – Kathy Eickenberg

## B. DISCUSSION

The following notes summarize the presentations and discussion points covered at the meeting.

### 1.0 Welcome, Introductory Remarks:

- 1.1 Will Harris (WH), Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, began the meeting with a very brief status of the planning process to date and turned the meeting over to Mohr & Seredin for presentation.

### 2.0 Mohr & Seredin:

- 2.1 Stephen Mohr (SM), of Mohr & Seredin reviewed the goals for this Advisory Committee meeting: first to present the working draft master plan recommendations; next to provide a chance for every committee member to provide comments on the direction that the plan is taking, and finally to finalize the schedule/direction for completing the plan.
- 2.2 Stephen reviewed the draft master plan with the committee, including
  - Goals / Purpose
  - Environmental Issues
  - Trail Issues
  - Draft Master Plan with 11 Draft Recommendation points
  - Individual Route plans for: ATV, biking, hiking, horseback riding, boating, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing.
  - Detail plan for main park entrance
  - Detail plan for picnic area
  - Detail plan for Conant Road entry

### 2.0 Advisory Committee Comments:

2.1 Charlie Noonan – Charlie stated that he is worried that designating the north entrance as the main entrance for the Park could be problematic in creating congestion on the Center Bridge Road as the park grows and as use of the NextEra boat launch increases.

2.2 Ray Boies – Asked what the boat landings would look like – will they be docks with floats? What do the 75-foot buffer zones and the waterfowl habitats mean; will they impact ability to go fishing in these areas? Kathy, Joe, and Stephen answered that the buffer zones and wildlife habitat areas won't change any ability to fish in the river. SM responded that the boat landing areas within ARP will have signage and, at some point, improvements for safe landing.

2.3 Ernie Deluca – Pointed out that the boat launch proposed in Greene by NextEra is being contested by the abutters, so it is unknown if it will move forward. Mohr & Seredin will show it as a proposed carry-in launch.

Ernie also said that there are 4 islands in the river that currently have picnic areas on which NextEra will allow camping, provided the local municipality (Turner) issues a fire permit. He indicated NextEra would have to provide sanitation facilities to allow this. Discussion followed about the logistics of the Fire Department issuing a permit, then having to respond to an emergency on an island.

2.4 Dave Chabot – Asked if trapping is still allowed, as it isn't mentioned in the masterplan. SM responded that it still is a use planned for the Riverlands. DC thinks it is necessary to help keep the beaver population down.

Dave also has concern about the boat landings and the turtle habitat and fish spawning habitat, especially in the center picnic meadow area. Jody asked if it would be appropriate to close during turtle season? Joe W. indicated that turtles lay eggs 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks in June, and eggs hatch throughout summer into next spring, depending upon weather.

Dave expressed concern about future vehicle access/parking areas on the interior of the park, and his ability to monitor what is taking place.

2.5 Mike Auger – Echoed turtle habitat concerns. He also indicated that he is attending the meeting in Jonathan LaBonte's place, as Jonathan couldn't attend. Mike distributed a letter from JLB indicating the Land Trust's support for the direction that the master plan is taking. Mike indicated that the ALT supports the vision plan and that they feel that it strikes a good balance between the different uses.

2.6 Neil Ward – Stated that the camping on the island(s) has become an issue for him. He gets several phone calls a year from people wishing to camp on the islands, and he doesn't know where to send them for permission. There is definitely an interest in camping. It was noted that a permit from the Town of Turner is need for fires on the island. Neil supported the proposed plan.

2.7 Jody Goodwin – Overall the recommendations in the masterplan are great. She feels that we need to be careful with the Conant Road access because of the neighborhood. Looking to obtain an access point from Upper Street is good, especially as it may take the pressure off of the Conant Road access.

She suggested that perhaps only two boat access points into ARP would suffice because of the Turtles. The first priority of the plan should be protecting the animal life and the ecology of the property. She is especially interested in boat access to the historic Mower foundations at the middle of the property.

She was glad to see that maintaining hunting on the property is part of the plan – not only for hunters but to keep the deer population at a reasonable level.

She likes the southern part of the property as a preservation area - as off-limits to ATV's except for hunting season. She indicated that she heard that the hunters won't want ATV's in there because they will scare the deer, but that they will use the ATV's to retrieve the deer carcass.

JG is not in favor of banning mountain biking from the Homestead and Ridge trails.

- 1.1 Ed Morris – In regards to the recommendation to acquire access from Upper Street he is questioning where is the money coming from to purchase it? Others answered that a funding source isn't known yet, but the access could also come in the form of an easement.

EM stated that the southern end isn't often groomed for snowmobile use so it would be great for XC ski and snowshoeing. Scott Ramsay said that snowmobilers often travel right on the river. Jody said that skiers and snowmobilers can use the same trail – and it often makes skiers feel safer, in case there is a need to get help.

The M&S Plan should be marked to show groomed vs. primitive snowmobile routes.

- 1.2 Mike Spugnardi – Mike was not opposed to limiting ATV use at the southern end as it is not used that much any more. He wanted to know more about the unauthorized access points. How many are documented? SM responded that there are 7 or 8 that M&S have noted. MS and LR believe that these are from local landowners.
- 1.3 Larry Robinson – Would like to see if there's a chance to keep the unauthorized west access routes for ATV's open, because it will become an issue with people cutting new trails and going around if existing trails are blocked.

If the trails aren't used at the south end, LR noted that they will become overgrown and close in. The ATV riders can maintain the trail to keep it open, and thereby share expenses for maintenance with the State.

LR stated that there is very little use of the south end anymore, and he would like to see it as a preservation area.

- 1.1 Brian Alexander – State that most mountain bikers don't want the Ridge trail closed to mountain biking. Some people are worried about user conflict and erosion, but he doesn't see it happening. With the re-design of the trails it will be perfectly suited for both hikers and bikers. There are lots of bikers who are willing to help maintain trails. There are hardly any hikers using the trail right now. Did Michelle

Altamore get data on how many people hiked the ridge trail? It was noted that she didn't get use trail by trail.

If there are no more new trails to be built, maybe the existing trails can be improved for all, then see how it goes. If there is a conflict, then look for remedies?

It was stated that this issue would be discussed in detail in a meeting set for November 24, 2009.

- 1.2 Mike Moreau – Would like to make sure that trapping is included as a continued use within the park. It was stated that trapping will continue, as long as a permit is obtained per Maine State Law. Ron Hunt added that, in order to help allay fears that hunting might not be allowed, the signs were posted at the park this year advising users that hunting is an allowed use on the land. Jody raised the concern about trapping and dogs, and that perhaps it would be a good idea to let people know via signage that dogs should remain on leash for their own protection.

- 1.3 David Hediger – Wanted to echo what Jody said regarding preserving the Homestead Trail and the Ridge Trail for both mountain biking and hiking. We should be providing for as many uses as possible. He doesn't see a problem now.

The river access points should be defined and designated to limit damage to the environment and habitat, avoiding sensitive areas like turtle nesting areas.

Overall David supported the balance achieved in the draft master plan which proposes minimal changes to the trails. Use will increase, and the plan should be revisited at some point, maybe in 10 years.

- 1.1 Bruce Farnham – BF noted that as more people use the park, it will be difficult to maintain the park as is and preserve its character. BF noted that it would be good to talk out some of the potential issues and conflicts now. Doesn't like the second parking area for hiking only at the north end. Maybe keep the one parking area and define where truck/trailer parking goes vs. cars, and utilize a kiosk to direct people where to go would be a better plan. He is nervous about a southern entrance becoming a problem area.
- 1.2 Joe Wiley – Just spent time at the park and it doesn't look much used. Joe stated that he has no issues except for some minor erosion issues, which can be fixed.
- 1.3 Rex Turner – By virtue of being a state park, there will be at least some amount of publicity (web, brochures, etc.) which will start attracting new users – as it has already. The Advisory Committee needs to keep in mind that there will be people who are not skilled outdoorspeople at ARP.
- 1.4 Scott Ramsay – The people who use the southern trail are those who live at the southern end. If it is closed to ATV's will they have to trailer their machines to the north or they will choose illegal entry. Another option is to keep the route/trail in a primitive condition – people enjoy the difficulty of the trail. The maintenance at the southern end hasn't been very good. ORV has been holding off until the plan was done.

- 1.5 Ron Hunt – Bruce made a good point about conflicting uses between mountain biking and hiking. He's noticed that there is a central trail for hikers and a sine-wave trail weaving back and forth over the central trail for the bikes. This needs to be carefully looked at and coordinated in detail, as it is confusing the way it is right now, as it's unclear where the trail actually is.

### **3.0 Discussion:**

- 3.1 Jody thought that there might be a need for accommodation for ATV use on the south.
- 3.2 Bruce noted that it might create more problems if ATV use was limited on the south end.
- 3.3 Charlie – state that he is worried about the proposed Auburn trail that it to be extended to ARP. It may be highly developed and it would lead to the undeveloped preservation area of the Riverlands.
- 3.4 Kathy Eickenburg noted that the purpose of this meeting was not to decide on the best plan, but to decide on what will be presented at the public meeting, which could include options.
- 3.5 Scott thought that there might be 3 options for use at the south end. 1-keep it primitive, 2-keep it improved, 3-allow use during hunting season as proposed in the draft plan.
- 3.6 Stephen indicated to the committee that we should revisit the issues of the hike / bike separation, and the ATV use on the south end of the park with the public.

### **4.0 Schedule:**

- 4.1 After discussion it was agreed that the Public Meeting will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup>.
- 4.2 Kathy reviewed the schedule for the rest of the planning process. It is:

Public Meeting – December 8, 2009  
Comment Period through December 23, 2009  
Final Draft to Advisory Committee (AC) by January 15, 2010  
Final Comments from AC by January 29, 2010  
Plan Completion and Adoption by February 6, 2010

Meeting notes prepared by Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects and reviewed by Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. Please notify us within 7 days of any inaccuracies in these notes.